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United for Quality Care

February 23, 2022  
Marcial Torres, PCA  
New Haven  
District 1199 New England  
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Marcial Torres and I'm a PCA from New Haven.

Having healthcare is a very important benefit to me because I come from a family with genetics like chronic cancer in the family and diabetes. I spend \$1500 dollars annually on supplements as a preventive measure trying to avoid these predisposed medical conditions in my family.

Unfortunately, I work as a PCA which means I do not receive health insurance from the State of CT and currently have no coverage. In fact, I work 3 jobs at 100 hours a week trying to ensure my own economic viability for lack of a living wage and medical insurance on this state waiver program. I sprained my ankle last fall and now have thousands in bills that I can't pay.

Without paid time off, we're also left out in the cold when we or our consumers get sick. In January, one of my consumers got COVID and had to be hospitalized; I lost 90% of my income without any replacement wages. I had to rely on my credit cards just to stay afloat, and now I'm working extra hours just to catch up.

Connecticut's negligence in failing to provide health care has left me with chronic fear and debt from bills when I couldn't avoid going to the Emergency room. I deserve affordable health care and I should not have to live in fear of becoming sick because our state calls us heroes, but treats us like zeroes. Please support funding for PCAs like me.